

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

City Planning Commission Staff Report

Executive Summary

Summary of Uptown and Carrollton Local Historic District Proposals:

The Historic Preservation Study Committee Report of April 2016, recommended the creation of the Uptown Local Historic District with boundaries to include the area generally bounded by the Mississippi River, Lowerline Street, South Claiborne Avenue and Louisiana Avenue, and the creation of the Carrollton Local Historic District with boundaries to include the area generally bounded by Lowerline Street, the Mississippi River, the Jefferson Parish line, Earhart Boulevard, Vendome Place, Nashville Avenue and South Claiborne Avenue. These partial control districts would give the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) jurisdiction over demolition. Additionally, it would give the HDLC full control jurisdiction over all architectural elements visible from the public right-of-way for properties along Saint Charles Avenue between Jena Street and South Carrollton Avenue, and over properties along South Carrollton Avenue between the Mississippi River and Earhart Boulevard.

Recommendation:

The CPC staff is presenting the Historic Preservation Study Committee Report and general information about the local historic districts without a recommendation. The staff expects to present an analysis and recommendation for the September 27, 2016 City Planning Commission meeting.

Consideration of the Study Committee Report:

City Planning Commission Public Hearing: The CPC holds a public hearing at which the report and recommendation of the Study Committee are presented and the public is afforded an opportunity to consider them and comment.

City Planning Commission's recommendations to the City Council: Within 60 days after the public hearing, the City Planning Commission will consider the staff report and make recommendations to the Council.

City Council Action: The report and recommendation will be reviewed at an open meeting of the City Council within a reasonable time after transmittal of the report, but not more than 90 days thereafter.

City Planning Commission Meeting
Tuesday, August 23, 2016

CPC Deadline: 10/22/16
CC Deadline: 90 days from receipt
Council District: A-Guidry
B-Cantrell

CONSIDERATION: Creation of the Uptown Local Historic District and Carrollton Local Historic District as proposed by the Historic Preservation Study Committee.

PRELIMINARY STAFF REPORT

To: City Planning Commission

From: Robert Rivers, Executive Director
Paul Cramer, Planning Administrator

Prepared by: Sabine Lebailleur and Brittany Desrocher

Date: August 16, 2016

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Proposal: To consider the Historic Preservation Study Committee Report of April 2016, recommending the creation of the Uptown Local Historic District boundaries to include the area generally bounded by the Mississippi River, Lowerline Street, South Claiborne Avenue and Louisiana Avenue, and the creation of the Carrollton Local Historic District boundaries to include the area generally bounded by Lowerline Street, the Mississippi River, the Jefferson Parish line, Earhart Boulevard, Vendome Place, Nashville Avenue and South Claiborne Avenue. These partial control districts would give the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) jurisdiction over demolition. Additionally, it would give the HDLC full control over all architectural elements visible from the public right-of-way for properties along Saint Charles Avenue between Jena Street and South Carrollton Avenue, and over properties along South Carrollton Avenue between the Mississippi River and Earhart Boulevard.

Why is City Planning Commission action required?

Chapter 16, Section 753 of the Louisiana State Legislation states that prior to the establishment of an historic preservation district a public hearing shall be held by the planning or zoning agency or commission serving the governmental unit, at which hearing the report and recommendations of the historic preservation study committee shall be presented and an opportunity afforded the public to consider them. The planning commission shall then submit a final report with recommendations to the governing body.

A. **Current Regulations**

Demolition in many of the city's oldest neighborhoods is currently governed by the Neighborhood Conservation District Advisory Committee (NCDAC). Pursuant to **Chapter 26, Article I, Section 26-3** of the New Orleans City Code of Ordinances, the purpose of the district was to preserve and stabilize neighborhoods through the protection of those structures that represent the character and quality of the neighborhood or the architectural history of New Orleans and to promote redevelopment that contributes to the historic character of the neighborhood. Demolition of any building in this area requires review and recommendations by the NCDAC and approval by the City Council.

The NCDAC jurisdiction covers almost every neighborhood between the Mississippi River and Florida Avenue less and except local historic districts under the jurisdiction of the HDLC, CBDHDLC or VCC. More precisely, it encompasses the area generally bounded, on the east bank of the Mississippi River, by the Orleans/Jefferson Parish line, Metairie Road, Interstate 10, Norfolk-Southern Railroad track, Orleans Avenue, City Park Avenue, Wisner Boulevard, Interstate 610, Florida Boulevard, the Orleans/St. Bernard Parish line, and the Mississippi River; on the west bank of the Mississippi River, by Atlantic Avenue, Bodenger Boulevard, the Orleans/Jefferson Parish line, and the Mississippi River. The NCD also includes all National Register Historic Districts that are on the National Register of Historic Places and in addition to the Gentilly Terrace National Register District, the area bounded by the following streets, and those properties fronting on the bounding streets, beginning at Elysian Fields Avenue at Gentilly Boulevard, north along Elysian Fields Avenue to Filmore Avenue, east along Filmore Avenue to Peoples Avenue, south along Peoples Avenues to Gentilly Boulevard, and along Gentilly Boulevard back to Elysian Fields Avenue. Both the Uptown and Carrollton neighborhoods are currently covered by the NCDAC boundaries.

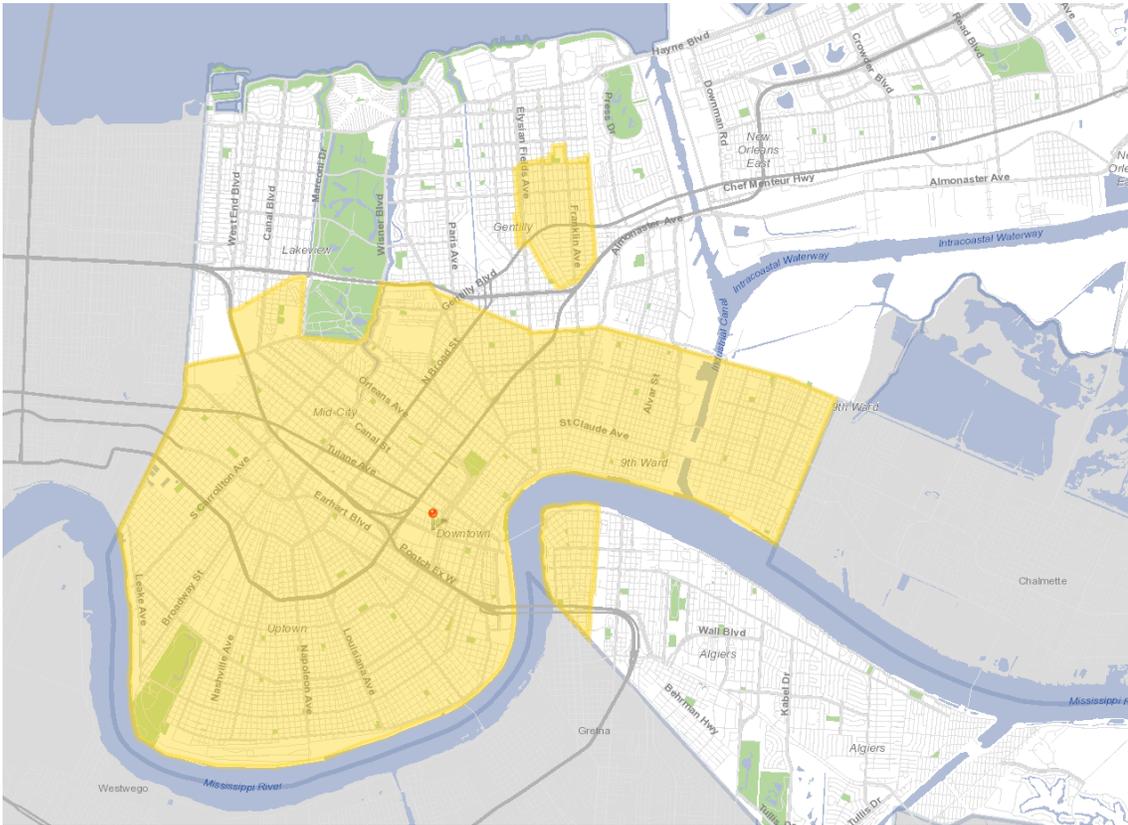


Figure 1. Area under NCDAC jurisdiction

For the areas proposed, NCDAC jurisdiction would be replaced with the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC). Currently, these areas are designated as National Historic Districts by the National Park Service. The Uptown and Carrollton neighborhoods are not in Local Historic Districts so they are currently not subject to any review from HDLC. National Register Districts do not provide any controls over demolition, construction, or renovation.

B. A Brief History of Planning in the Study Area and Vicinity

The following events have culminated in the recommendation of the Study Committee:

- 1985:** The Uptown District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1987:** The Carrollton District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 2015:** The Uptown/Carrollton Historic Preservation Review Committee was established by the City Council.
- 2015:** Uptown/Carrollton Preservation Review Committee holds public meetings and makes a recommendation regarding boundaries and levels of jurisdiction.

2016: HDLC forwards Study Report and committee recommendations to the City Planning Commission.

C. General reasons for the Creation of a Historic District

In addition to recognizing the historical value of an area and furthering the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the public, there are a number of additional specific benefits to creating a historic district:

1. The declaration of local historic district status preserves the historical integrity of the area and prevents intrusion of buildings that are not in character with the surroundings.
2. The ability to regulate and control demolitions assists in securing the preservation of valuable buildings while providing a thorough review process for demolition applications.
3. There are advantages and incentives in the form of investment tax credits, façade easements, and restoration tax abatements.
4. Design control over new construction would assure the environmental and architectural integrity of the area. Rehabilitation investments are protected by the review of adjacent properties and foster an atmosphere for reinvestment.
5. The “demolition by neglect” provisions of the HDLC assist in preventing the deterioration of existing structures.

D. Authority of the HDLC over Local Historic Districts with Partial Control

The authority of the HDLC over Local Historic Districts differs from one district to another. The Study Committee recommends a partial control over the proposed Uptown and Carrollton Local Historic Districts. There are different levels of partial control. For example the Garden District Local Historic District was created in 2007 giving the HDLC jurisdiction over new construction, demolition, and demolition by neglect, but did not include renovation, or addition. The partial control districts proposed for Uptown and Carrollton would give the HDLC jurisdiction over demolition only, except for properties sharing a property line with either Saint Charles or South Carrollton Avenues. These two corridors would be full control.

1. The designation of a partial control local historic district would give the Historic District Landmarks Commission jurisdiction within the stated boundaries and the authority to regulate demolitions of privately owned buildings.

E. Authority of the HDLC over Local Historic Districts with Full Control

The Study Committee recommends a full control over the properties of the Uptown and Carrollton Local Historic Districts that share a property line with either St Charles Avenue between Jena Street and South Carrollton Avenue, and over properties along South Carrollton Avenue between the Mississippi River and Earhart Boulevard.

1. The designation of a full control local historic district would give the Historic District Landmarks Commission jurisdiction within the stated boundaries and the authority to regulate new construction, additions and demolitions of privately owned buildings, as well as any other work to the exterior of a property visible from the public right-of-way.
2. No new private building, structure, or edifice shall be constructed until after an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness as to exterior architectural features has been submitted to and approved by the Historic District and Landmark Commission. Similarly, if earthworks of historical or archeological importance exist in a district, there shall be no excavating or moving of earth, rock, or subsoil without a Certificate of Appropriateness.
3. The Historic District and Landmark Commission shall not consider interior arrangement or use, but shall consider the relationship of the exterior of the building concerned with all others in the district so as to avoid incongruity and promote harmony therewith. In all instances the Commission shall regulate those outside surfaces of a building that can be viewed from a public right of way or street.
4. Nothing in the enabling legislation shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or repairs which do not involve a change of design, material, or of the outward appearance of a building.

F. Proposed Districts Boundaries

The proposed Uptown and Carrollton Local Historic Districts boundaries are intended to closely follow the boundaries of the existing Carrollton and Uptown National Register Districts. However, so as to be easily understood, the Study Committee recommends to simplify these boundaries and include a few areas that fall outside of the National Register Districts but contain numerous historic buildings.

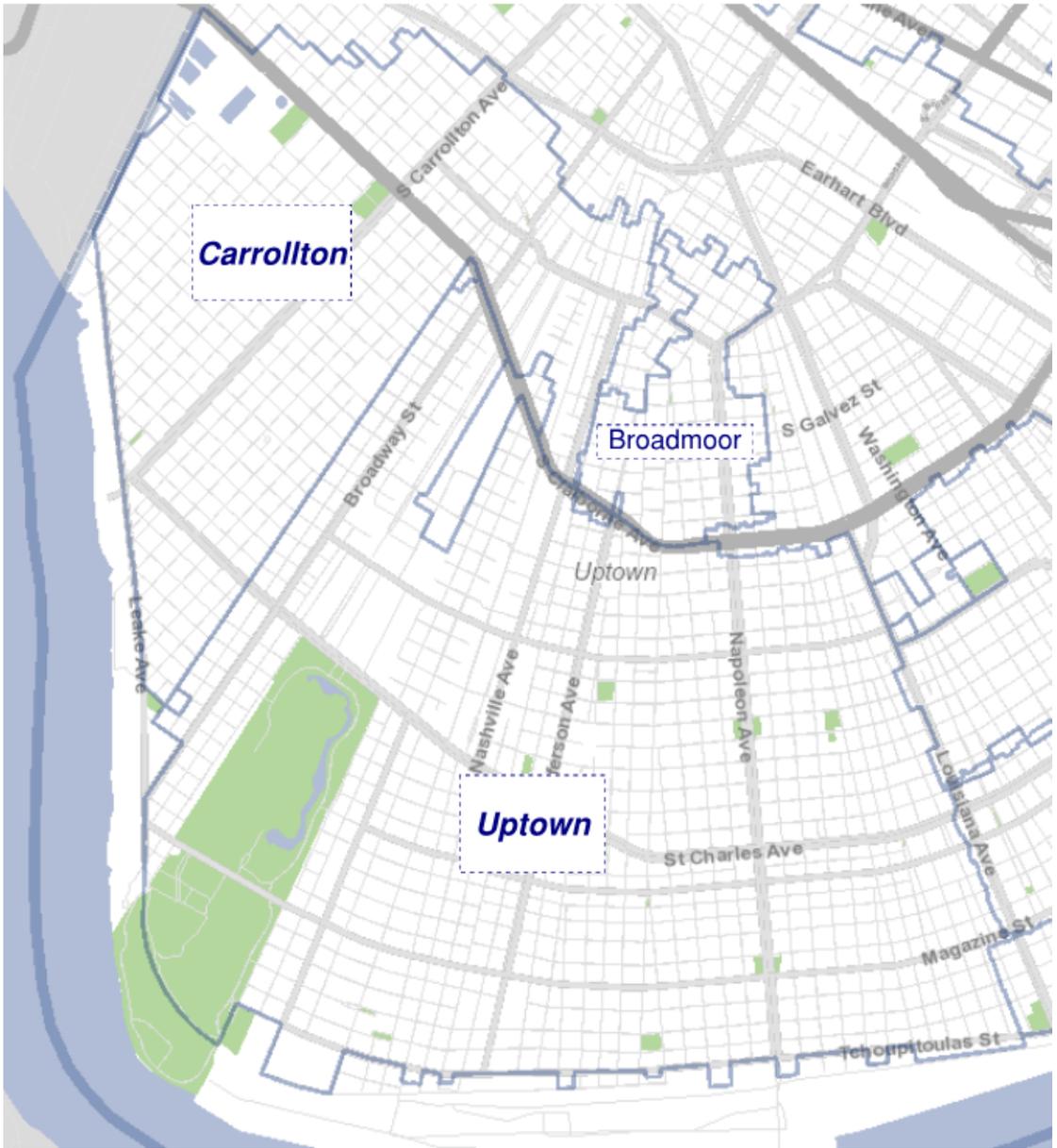


Figure 2. Uptown and Carrollton National Historic Districts

Proposed Uptown Local Historic District boundaries:

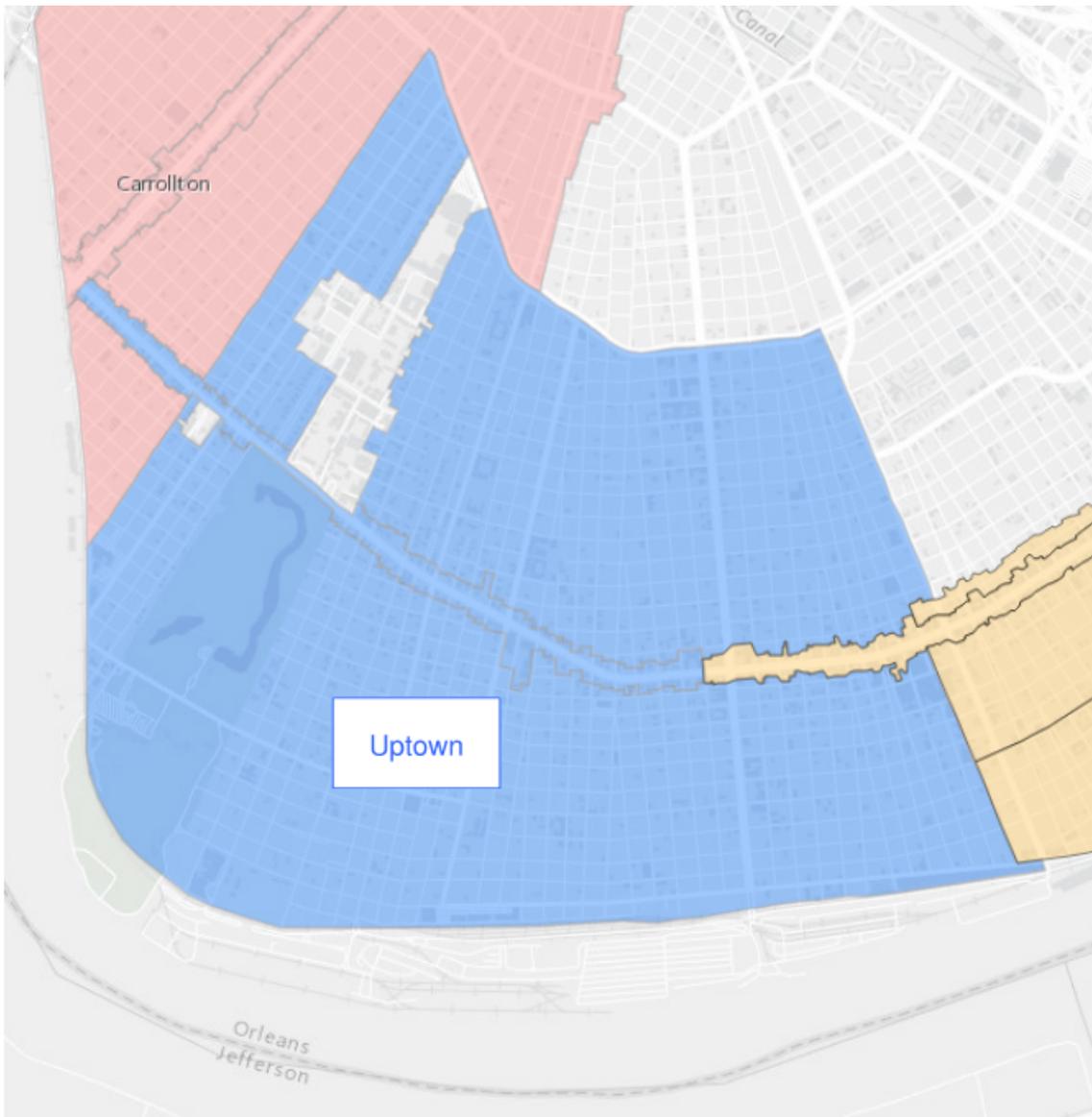


Figure 3. Proposed Uptown Local Historic District

The proposed north, west, east and south boundaries of the proposed Uptown Local Historic District are simplified in comparison to the existing boundaries of the National Register. In addition, the Tulane and Loyola Universities properties were carved out of the proposed boundaries.

Boundaries description:

Starting at the intersection of South Claiborne Avenue and Louisiana Avenue to St. Charles Avenue, turn right and proceed to Delachaise Street. Turn left and proceed toward the river to Tchoupitoulas Street. Turn left on Tchoupitoulas Street and proceed upriver to Louisiana Avenue. Turn right on Louisiana Avenue and proceed to the river's edge. Follow the river's edge to Lowerline Street. Turn right on Lowerline Street and proceed towards the lake to the intersection of Lowerline Street and South Claiborne Avenue. Turn right on South Claiborne Avenue and proceed down river until the

intersection of Louisiana Avenue and South Claiborne Avenue. This boundary excludes Tulane and Loyola Universities¹ as well as those properties located in the St. Charles Avenue Local Historic District and The Garden District Local historic district.

Proposed Carrollton Local Historic District boundaries:

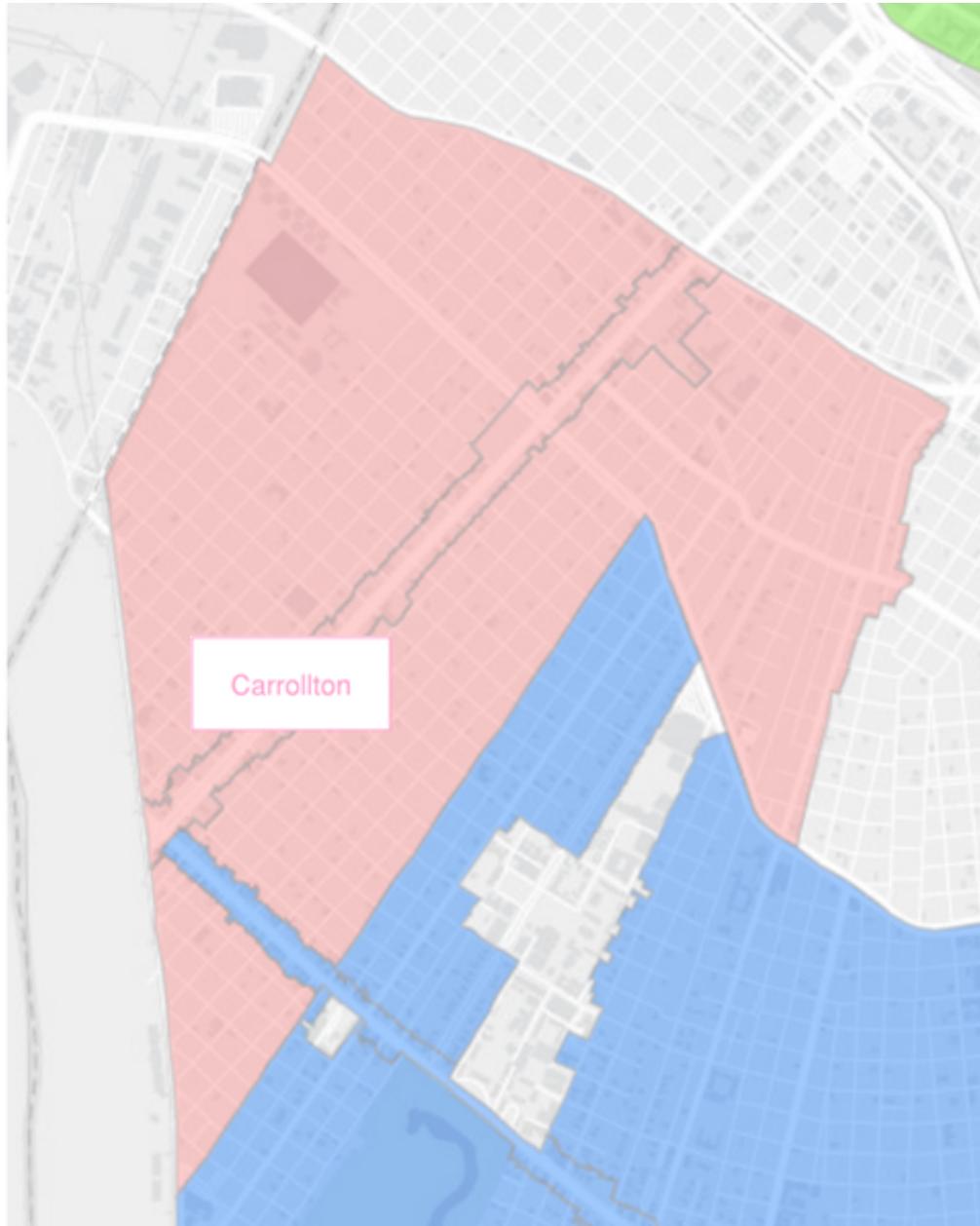


Figure 4. Proposed Carrollton Local Historic District

The boundaries of the proposed Carrollton Local Historic District are simplified in comparison to the boundaries of the existing National Register especially on the northern side of the district to include all properties to the south of Earhart Boulevard.

¹ Exempted by LA Revised Statute 25:745

Boundaries description:

Start at the intersection of Martin Luther King Blvd. and Vendome Place. Proceed to the intersection of Vendome Place and Dart Street. Turn left and proceed toward the rear property line of the building facing Vendome Place to the intersection of Grape Street and Octavia Street. Proceed down the centerline of Octavia Street to the intersection of Octavia and Walmsley Avenue. Turn left and proceed to the rear property line of the property at the corner of Octavia and Walmsley Avenue. Turn right and proceed along the rear property lines of the properties fronting on Octavia Street to the rear property line of the property fronting Fontainebleau drive. Turn left and proceed along the rear property lines of the buildings fronting Fontainebleau Drive to the property lines separating 4421 and 4415 Fontainebleau Drive. Turn right and proceed across Fontainebleau Drive and along the property line separating 4428 and 5416 Fontainebleau Drive. Proceed along the rear property lines of the buildings fronting Octavia Street to Hewes Street. Turn right on Hewes Street and proceed to the intersection of Octavia and Hewes Street. Turn left and proceed to the property line separating 3738 and 3724 Octavia Street. Turn right and proceed to the rear property line of the buildings fronting Nashville Avenue. Turn left and proceed along the rear property lines of buildings fronting Nashville Avenue to South Rocheblave Street. Turn right and proceed to the intersection of South Rocheblave and Joseph Street. Turn left and proceed down the center line of Joseph Street to South Claiborne Avenue. Turn right and proceed along the Centerline of South Claiborne Avenue to the intersection of Lowerline and South Claiborne Avenue. Turn left and proceed down the Centerline of Lowerline Street to the intersection with Leake Avenue. Turn right and proceed down Leake Avenue. At the end of Leake Avenue proceed in the same direction to the parish line. Proceed along the parish line to Earhart Expressway. Proceed along Earhart Expressway until it becomes Earhart Boulevard. Proceed along Earhart Boulevard to the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Proceed along Martin Luther King Blvd to Vendhome Place.

The corridor along Saint Charles Avenue would become a continuation of the existing Saint Charles Avenue Local Historic District, which currently exists between Jackson Avenue and Jena Street. This full control district would be expanded from Jena Street to South Carrollton Avenue. The corridor along South Carrollton Avenue, between the Mississippi River and Earhart Boulevard would become a full control spine within the partial control Carrollton district.

Pursuant to RS 25:745, the properties or collection of properties under common ownership having any lot line on the northerly side of St Charles between Calhoun Street and Law Road, or on the south side of St Charles between Broadway and Lowerline Street, cannot be under the jurisdiction of a Local Historic District. These properties are Tulane and Loyola Universities properties, which will be excluded from HDLC jurisdiction.

II. PRELIMINARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The CPC staff is presenting the Historic Preservation Study Committee Report and general information about the local historic district without a recommendation. The staff expects to present an analysis and recommendation for September 27, 2016 City Planning Commission meeting. Written comments will be accepted until 5pm, Monday September 19, 2016. It is customary for the CPC to hold two public hearings prior to making a recommendation on the designation of a local historic district.